



JACK DOYLE

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

For Immediate Release:
Tuesday, July 2, 2002

Doyle Introduces Early Retirement Program

Employees who retire before September 1 will receive additional four weeks pay

Monroe County Executive Jack Doyle today introduced an early retirement program for County employees. The previously announced program was submitted yesterday to the legislature for approval. The retirement program is the latest in a series of measures introduced to reduce the cost of County government and prevent a property tax increase. County Executive Doyle has already enacted a reduction in capital projects and travel expenses, along with other initiatives to address the County's challenging fiscal situation. By offering the early retirement program, the County hopes to encourage eligible employees to retire and lessen the severity of a reduction in the County workforce, which could potentially include hundreds of employees.

"This is the latest in my efforts to keep faith with the taxpayers of our community and prevent a property tax increase," said Doyle. "Clearly, we need to shrink the size of County government, and by offering this early retirement program I hope we can lessen the impact on County workers. A property tax increase would be devastating to our local employers and residents, who ultimately pay the bills. County government needs to be of a size that is sustainable for our taxpayers."

The number of participants in the early retirement program will help determine the reduction in the workforce necessary to address the County's fiscal situation, which has resulted primarily from increased Medicaid and health insurance costs along with decreased or stagnant State and sales tax revenues. Any decisions regarding a reduction in the County workforce would be made later this year.

Doyle also unveiled an additional incentive for County employees that choose to retire before September 1, 2002. Employees electing to retire before that date will receive a lump-sum payment equivalent to four weeks of their base pay. The goal of the additional incentive is to speed the reduction in the County workforce in order to maximize the savings realized due to the retirements.

"In order to strengthen our local economy and create well-paying private sector jobs we have to keep taxes stable," said Doyle. "Efforts such as the early retirement program are about right-sizing County government to a size our local families can afford in today's economy."

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There are two parts to the early retirement program. Part A will be available to County employees 50 or over with at least 10 years of service in the New York State employee retirement system. County employees eligible for the ERIP will receive a letter informing them about the program and asking them to respond if they are interested in participating. Under the ERIP, employees will be eligible for an incentive equal to one-twelfth of a year of additional retirement credit for each year of service, up to a maximum of three years of credit.

Part B is available to employees who are between the ages 55 and 62 with 25 years or more of service in the New York State employee retirement system. Under the 55/25 plan, eligible employees will be able to retire early without penalty or reduction in their pension. The plan begins July 3rd and will run for 90 days.

The Monroe County Legislature is expected to consider approval of the early retirement incentive program during its July meeting. Monroe County has participated in each of the retirement incentive programs that the state has offered since 1994. New York State has approved an early retirement incentive program in 7 of the past 8 years.

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